

Social Selling - Amp up your Business

DE Brown August 09, 2018



Social Selling can eliminate cold calling and pointless networking. Social Selling helps you build your business in a comfortable and natural way.

([Newswire.net](#) -- August 9, 2018) -- Social selling is about building and leveraging your social networks to find the right prospects, build trusted relationships, and ultimately, achieve your sales or fund raising goals. This social selling technique enables a better lead generation and forms the basis of a prospecting process that totally eliminates the need for cold calling. People do business with people that they *KNOW, LIKE and TRUST*. Building relationships with new prospects is the very best way to turn them into new clients or donors. Think about some of the new

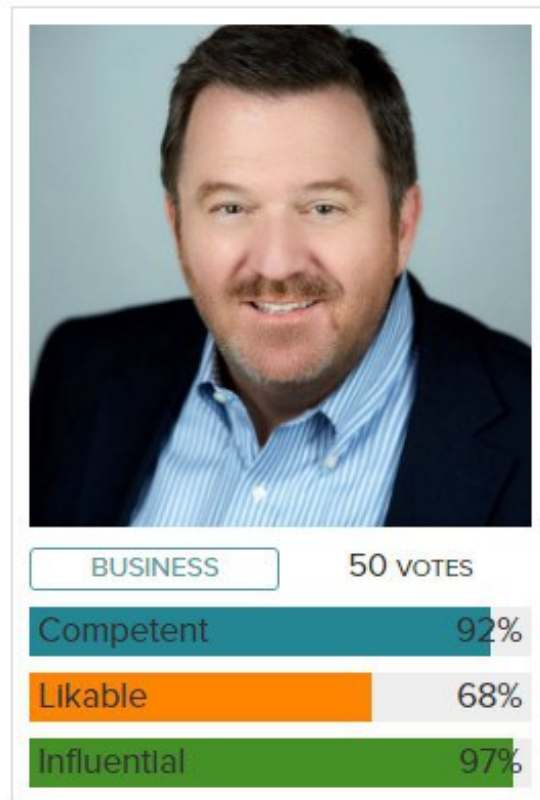
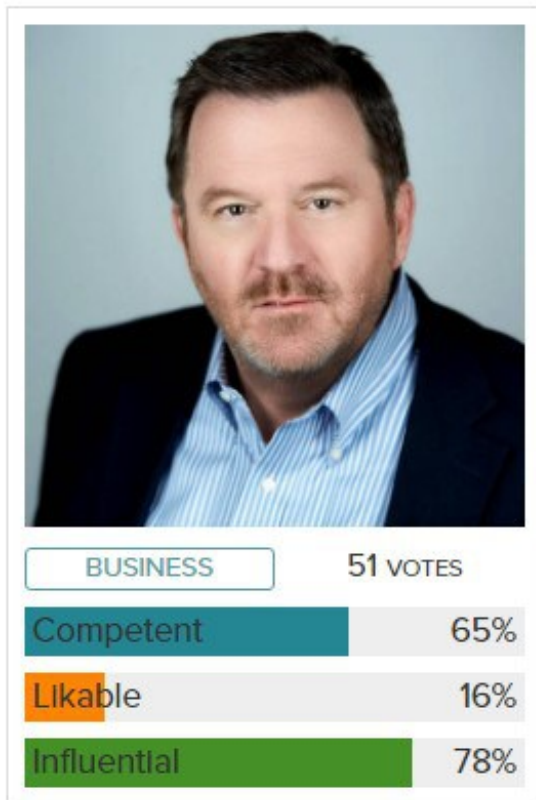
business, clients, or donors you've recently picked up. Surely some (if not all) of your new business has come from referrals. And, most likely, those successful relationships did not happen overnight, but have probably come from people that you've been in contact with for a number of months, or even years. In a very real way, **your network is your net worth**. Your valuable relationships are at work for you every day, slowly moving people deeper and deeper into your "know, like and trust circle". Now, what if you could accelerate this process with thousands of new prospects? Online social networks allow you to do just that, but you have to use them correctly.

The 12 Steps of Social Selling

So what is the point of reviewing the steps of personal intimacy? I want you to start thinking about your social networking relationships as things that require an order and a consensual progression in much the same way as your romantic relationships. How many times have you connected with someone on Facebook or LinkedIn only to receive a sales offer from them right away? What was your reaction? I bet you didn't buy. Or how about an unsolicited email from someone you don't know. That is so annoying that we have actually made (ineffective) laws against it. How do you feel when someone unknown to you knocks on your door or rings you on the phone trying to sell you something? Just like in a romantic setting trying to get to the end, to Step 12, without engaging and getting consent at every step all along the way is not only unlikely to succeed, it is MORE than likely to backfire, and ruin any potential of a relationship. There is a natural order to both personal and online social relationships. Don't take shortcuts. They feel unnatural, they are at best awkward, and will all ultimately fail.

Here are my 12 Steps of Social Selling:

1. **Establish your professional brand.** Just as a glance reveals much about a person in the steps of personal intimacy, you may get no more than a one-chance-glance to attract social connections. You need to make sure that you're easy to find and that all the info you put into your social profiles is both consistent, and representative of the persona that you want to portray. Remember that "like attracts like", which in this context means portray yourself as a peer to the people that you want to connect with. Many people make the same mistakes that prevent them from effectively establishing their brand.
2. **Refine your profile and Profile image.** This is where you "exchange glances". It has been said that a picture is worth a thousand words; well I think that number under-sells the importance of putting the right image up on your social profiles. Little things make BIG differences when it comes to your profile images. So you need to split test. Here are two free resources you can use to refine your profile images: [snappr.co](#), and [www.photofeeler.com](#).



What a difference a smile makes!! Look at the drastic differences in response that these two virtually identical images illicit when split tested: It should go without saying that you should CAREFULLY monitor all images uploaded onto every social media platform. Never upload a beach, party, or overly personal image onto any social media platform. And tell your kids the same. For help with your headline and other social media page content, check out [this article](#).

3. **Post on Social Media.** As you post, either written or video posts, you will take the next real step in social engagement. Posting is your opportunity to have your voice heard, and demonstrate who you are and what is important to you. Be strategic with your posts. If you are there for business, keep it all business. And just like Thanksgiving Dinner with your family, avoid the topics of politics and religion. I have a friend that lost literally ¼ of his connection network, and an opportunity to be included on an important national advisory committee over a political comment that he made on a post.
4. **Follow and Connect.** Connecting on social media is the first instance of real contact between two people, and is the Social Selling equivalent of “holding hands”. Take some time and think about your perfect customer or connection. Where do they live, what job title do they have, etc. You can search for that perfect connection with some great tools for LinkedIn. When you find your “perfect connection”, you need to extend a *personalized* invitation to connect. Connection requests need to include a mention of mutual interests and shared contacts. If you customize your connection requests, you can expect almost 1/3 of your request to result in connections. Check out this post for
5. **Read and Comment.** Now that you have connected with someone that fits your profile of your perfect customer of contact, their postings will come into your feed. As you engage by commenting and liking others posts you are figuratively putting your arm around your new connection, letting them know you are interested.
6. **Identify and react.** Listen for buying signals from prospects in LinkedIn groups or Twitter threads. Is your prospect posting in LinkedIn groups or asking for purchasing advice? If so, that is the right time to jump into the conversation. Since [90% of all B2B buying decisions are influenced by peer recommendations](#), listening carefully to the chatter on social media can greatly help identify when a prospect is ready to buy.
7. **Provide a solution.** This is when you come face to face with your new social contact. Share Content that Counts: Let’s be honest with ourselves: There is a lot of bad content out there. To make sure you are not contributing to the noise, only share and retweet content that brings value to others. This also means sharing content other than just what your brand publishes. Having a softer sales approach and sharing third-party content is essential to building your brand and demonstrating an unbiased point of view.

8. **Email.** Moving your conversation to email is the next step in escalating your relationship with your connection. Just like putting a hand to face, emailing content is a clear step up from messaging content via a social platform. If you follow the above steps, you will find that almost 50% of your emails are opened and read by your social connections. Contrast that with the (way) less than 1% open rates that unsolicited emails normally get.
9. **Phone.** So here we are ready to try for “1st base”. The natural progression of the relationship that you have developed with your contact is to get them on the phone. This is NOT a sales call. You have to have another reason to talk. But once you talk, your relationship will be on a whole new footing.
10. **The Small Ask.** At this point and only at this point in Social Selling is it time to ask for something. Start small. No matter how small the sale, or how insignificant the commitment (time or money) once someone shows up to an appointment or call, or opens their wallet they have made the huge step from being a prospect to becoming a client. In the non-profit world, that first step may be showing up to volunteer for anything, or bidding at a charity auction. In the sales world, it might be purchasing something for less than \$100 or meeting for lunch. Either way, your relationship is on a whole new footing after your prospect takes a real action, no matter how small.
11. **The Close.** OK, I bet you thought that the close was going to be Social Selling Step 12, the home run, the BIG finish. Nope. Sure all organizations need the close. But in the big picture, the value of your connection is not the money or time they can give you, but rather the multiplying effect you will enjoy when your new connections begin referring others you to that will give you *their* money or time. So close the sale or commitment, but always with an eye toward multiplying your effectiveness by getting your connections to recommend you to others and *help you* close them.
12. **The Referral.** So here we are. A fully mature relationship. Cherish and nurture those that stay with you through all 12 steps. They are your greatest asset, and the real point of social selling.

Remember, your *network* is your *net-worth*.

Social Selling Conclusion

Social selling is one of the least time-consuming selling activities out there, with a huge potential for ROI. Of course, adding anything to your daily to-do list requires some planning and a new mindset. After you have invested a little time in your personal brand and images, here's a good formula to start out with, that takes just 90 minutes per week:

30 Minutes: At the beginning of each week, maybe Sunday evening when you are planning your week, take half an hour to tweet and LinkedIn posts about your area of expertise. These can be original ideas, links to branded content, or third-party content about what interests you the most. Search for and find 5 new people that you would like to connect with, and send them personalized invitations.

20 Minutes: Around midweek, take 20 minutes to actively social listen. This means reading LinkedIn group discussions and/or following hashtag conversations on Twitter and jumping in where relevant. Make sure to also share or re-tweet posts from thought leaders or prospects during this time as well.

10 Minutes: Every day, check LinkedIn and Twitter for notifications, connection requests, and direct messages. When you start outbound contributing more, you'll notice an influx of inbound requests, which is exactly what you want. Double-check your settings across your social networks and turn on push notifications on your phone to make sure you aren't missing out on important conversations. [Contact us](#) for help implementing your Social Selling program.

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